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SOAKED PENSION PAPERS.

Government Officials Make a Raid on Philadelphia Pawnshops with Good Results.

A Philadelphia special says: The pawn-brokers of this city are excited to-night over a novel raid made upon them by Detective Gray and George D. Mills, special agents of the interior department. The captured property consists of three hundred pension papers upon which money had been advanced to poverty stricken old soldiers. This raid is the first of its kind ever made in this country, and was instituted by direction of Gen. Sickel, the chief of the Philadelphia pension office, in conformity with the regulations of a bill passed by congress on the 28th of last February that "any pledge, mortgage, sale, assignment or traffic of any right, claim or interest in any pension which had been or may hereafter be granted, shall be void and of no effect, and any person who shall pledge, or receive as a pledge, mortgage, sale, assignment or transfer of any right, claim or interest in any pension or pension certificate which has been, or may hereafter be, granted or issued, or who shall hold the same as collateral security for any debt or promise, or upon any pretext of such security or promise shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined in a sum not exceeding \$100 and the costs of the prosecution. Any person who shall retain the certificate of a pensioner, and refuse to surrender the same upon the demand of the commissioner of pensions, or a United States pension agent, or any other person authorized by the commissioner of pensions or the pensioner to receive the same, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined in a sum not to exceed \$100 and the costs of prosecution."

"I tell you," said Special Agent Mills to a reporter, "We had an awful lot of trouble in getting some of these papers. The pawn brokers kicked like everything. They cried and howled for the money they had advanced upon them, and wanted to know how they were to recompense their loss. I told them I didn't know; that my business was simply to get the papers, and when they appeared unusually stubborn I showed them the law. When they declared that they had no pension papers, and I imagined that they were lying, I made them produce their books. I visited every pawnshop in the city nearly, eighty in all."

Some of the pawnbrokers had accumulated a large number of papers. Mr. Mills recovered from Drehr & Schofield seventy-five papers, upon which the firm assured the detectives, with tears in their eyes, they had advanced about \$500. Tears and protestations were of no avail, and Mr. Mills quietly pocketed the documents and passed on to the shop of S. Nathan, where, after protracted search, only two papers were found. Jacob Salger was fortunate in having accumulated only one pension paper, which promptly went to swell the collection in Gray's coat-tail pocket.

From Robert Baird they got but one paper, and from Edward Levin a round dozen, all of them soiled and careworn in appearance. Abram Long contributed as his unwilling share of the peremptory collection three pension papers, and Thomas Boyle only one paper. Gustavus Rosenbaum was forced to disgorge sixteen of the documents after much tearful expostulation upon his part, and a second descent upon Carver Reed succeeded in bringing to light sixty-two additional papers. G. W. Kendrick gave up forty-eight papers, and Reuben Jacobs forty-nine. Single papers were also got from the establishments of various other pawnbrokers.

The chief clerk said in conversation that there are in all the eastern districts of Pennsylvania about twenty thousand pension papers outstanding, of which number seven thousand are held in this city. Mr. Mills, speaking

up, said: "The pawnbrokers are not the only persons by whom the papers have been held. A large number have been left with the proprietors of gin-mills, the pensioners in return 'changing up' their drinks. We cannot reach this class except by lying in wait for them on pay days."

The chief clerk of the pension office at Washington, J. W. Howells, held a conference with Gen. Sickel before the raid was made. The value of the papers recovered aggregate about \$7,000. They average payments of \$18 per quarter. A good proportion had been granted to widows, who had probably pawned them to keep want from the door. It is the intention of the interior department to extend this raid in other cities and states. The raid will shortly be made throughout the entire state.

Curious Facts.

St. Marks, in Venice, is a reproduction on a smaller scale of the Mosque of Santa Sophia.

The Parthenon was sometimes called "The temple of one hundred feet" from its breadth.

The original of Burns's Tam o' Shanter was one Douglas Grahame, who lived near Marsbole, Scotland.

All the sycamore trees now in Scotland have sprung from a little tree which Mary Stuart brought from France and planted in Holyrood.

The Sutro tunnel, which was driven through Mount Davidson, in Nevada, to intercept the Great Comstock lode, is four miles long, and cost \$5,000,000.

There was formerly a wooden bridge at Portage, N. Y., 800 feet long and 234 feet high. It was said to be the largest structure of the kind in the world.

The music of "Rule Britannia," which is usually ascribed to Dr. Arne, is said to have been taken from an air in Hamlet's "Occasional Oratorio," composed in 1746.

The tradition that aromatic vinegar was invented by four thieves who during the plague at Marseilles plundered dead bodies with impunity, and revealed the secret of their prophylactic on condition that their lives should be spared, is made doubtful by the fact that Cardinal Wolsey used aromatic vinegar, and that he died more than a century before the first plague raged.

The Abyssinians have a curious tradition as to the custom of burying the dead. They say that when Adam found the body of the murdered Abel he carried it about upon his shoulders for twenty days, not knowing how to dispose of it. The Almighty took pity on him, and sent forth a crow with a dead young one on its back. The crow flew before Adam until it came to a tract of sandy ground, in which it dug a hole with its feet, and there buried its young one. When Adam saw this, he dug a grave in the sand and buried his dead boy in it.

Dr. Dix on the Female Brain. New York World.

The trustees of Columbia college have submitted a report on the education of women, and accompanied it with a plan, by following which ambitious young ladies may obtain a certificate stamped and sealed by the college.

This plan, it is suspected, was prepared by Rev. Dr. Morgan Dix, with the belief that it would effectually paralyze the ordinary female aspirant for college honors. It contemplates four years of study, and includes etymology, philology, ethnology, physiology, psychology, archaeology, theology, biology, geology, paleontology and ontology. It begins with English literature, meanders through French, Latin, Greek and Italian, touches on chemistry, geometry, astronomy, takes up ethics, mechanics and navigation, rounds the headlands of the higher mathematics, dallies awhile with mineralogy, lithology and civil engineering, and reaches at last the open sea of moral philosophy and transcendental ethics.

It is both comprehensive and expansive, but if Dr. Dix supposes for one moment that the schedule will give the young woman of America pause and turn her aspiring thoughts into the humbler paths of life, where bloom the pansies and laurels of unscholarly triumphs, he is mistaken. This formidable plan will not for one moment deter any young woman who has been through the curriculum of our public schools, where, indeed, the transcendental philosophy came in with the chewing gum and all the ologies were as familiar as the story papers.

Man and His Fellow-Insects.

Texas Siftings.

Many wonderful stories have been told about the sagacity of birds, beasts, and insects. Those who have had any opportunity of revelling in the delights of country life know a great deal about the sharpness of the bumble bee and the keen penetration of the wasp. We read surprising accounts of the sage hen on the wild western prairies. We think the wonderful sagacity of animals and insects is overrated. It is with the lower creation as it is with man, both have their weak as well as their strong points. The man who may show genius for building bridges may be an ignominious failure as a performer on a jewsharp, and the scientist, who knows much about astronomy, and who is able to weigh and measure the stars, may not be a success in winning a prize in the Louisiana lottery. We have known a man who could balance an orange on his nose in a manner calculated to command the awe and admiration of all the crowned heads of Europe, but who was a transcendental failure as a pawnbroker. So is it with other insects. There is the bee, for instance. It gets a great deal of credit for its industry, and because, without any mathematical education, it places the comb in its hive at precisely the angle that will cause it to occupy the least possible space, people rave about the intelligence of the bee and write poetry about it. Yet the bee, with all its superhuman intelligence, will, when swarming, allow itself to be bagged by a negro boy beating on an old tin pan. Like bees, the mass of the people allow themselves to be bagged by demagogues, who shake some political bloody shirt at them.

Again, like the bee, there are men who—well, for example, there is that wealthy citizen of Houston, whose ability, enterprise, and money built a railroad through the pine regions. He was hived a short time ago by a banco man—the simple old lottery ticket game—and the prominent railroad man, when he balanced his cash, was \$1,600 short.

It is claimed for the red ant that it is one of the most intelligent of the saurian tribes that roam the plains. It is extolled to the skies, and patted on the back, so to speak, on account of its great foresight in laying up during summer food and fuel for winter. This is all very creditable to the ant, as is also the fact that it eschews politics, speculations, poker, etc. Yet communities of ants will, year after year, build their residences in the middle of a wagon road where hundreds of them are crushed to death daily, and it never occurs to them to move their state capital to a more safe locality. In wreaking vengeance on man, the intelligent ant is particularly stupid. After it has sealed a man's lower extremities and inflicted a stigma, as it were, on the sufferer that causes him to shed tears and some of his clothes, the ant does not seek to escape by flight, but sticks right to the spot where the injured party can get at him and dislocate his spine or wrench off his legs with a lemon squeezer.

There may be traced a resemblance between the ant and the defaulting clerk or bank cashier, who brazen it out in the place where he is depredated, and who fails to seek repose in some country without an extradition treaty, and where detectives do not break through and steal him away. There is also some resemblance to the ant in the class of men who industriously gather of the world's goods, at the same time neglecting their health and living in insalubrious places.

We might turn to the festive mosquito, that does not lay in firewood when it is cheap in summer and as a consequence perishes miserably in winter, and we might show a parallel case among men, who are as careless about the future as the negroes of Jamaica, who can lie in bed the year around, and reaching out of their cabin window, pick the Jamaica rum off the trees.

An Accomplished Daughter of Georgia. Fort Gaines Tribune.

Mrs. V. A. O'Connor, who has been absent some time, returned to Fort Gaines on Friday last. Mrs. O'Connor is mistress of quite a number of accomplishments. She can play on the piano with one foot, and carry on a conversation at the same time. We saw some exquisite fancy work of various kinds of her make.

Russian Mulberry and Kansas Silk.

Kansas Farmer.

Mr. L. S. Crozier, the pioneer silk grower of Kansas, now in the south, recently paid a visit to Kansas to look after silk interests. He also visited several other states. A report of his trip is published in American Silk and Fruit Culturist, from which we copy that part relating to Kansas. He says:

The general agent of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad, Mr. Johnson, had previously offered my company a free pass, in order that we might visit the Mennonites, from Newton to Hutchinson, and ascertain what quantity and what quality of cocoons could be procured from them.

At Newton I was referred to Mr. Munterferin, the German agent of the company, a true gentleman, whose perfect politeness and pure French language made me think I was back again in Paris, and not in the far west. Soon after my arrival two fast trotters brought us amongst the immense fields of wheat, bordered by interminable hedges of mulberry trees, planted by the Mennonites. My first care was to ascertain to what kind belongs the Russian mulberry tree, and was not astonished at all to find that, like the Spanish, the English, the Turkish and the Italian, this so-called Russian mulberry is simply the *Morus alba*, with almost all its varieties in the wild state, which have never been improved by grafting, by the selection of the seeds, or by propagating the best varieties from cuttings, layers, etc. So their tree is a classic one, and cocoons of the best quality can be produced with it, if the breed of the silkworms they raise belong to the first quality.

I found among them more than twenty thousand pounds of cocoons for sale, and was gratified to learn that since they are sure they have a market for them, the two thousand families, scattered over a surface of about fifty square miles, between Newton and Hutchinson, can produce two hundred thousand pounds of cocoons this coming season, and treble that amount in less than two years, without losing an ear of corn or a straw of wheat.

The trees are planted in thick hedges, at the limits of the fields, and on both sides of the highways. They are cut down, one-third at a time, every three years, and in that rich but timberless country, in such a short time, these trees grow four to six main branches as big as a man's limb, and furnish an abundant supply of fuel to their intelligent planters. Besides that, the stables of these gentle, hospitable and laborious people are crowded with cows in the winter time, and with silkworms in May or June, while their granaries are filled with corn and wheat, and their orchards ornamented with all kinds of fruit trees and grape vines.

These facts, which superabundantly prove that silk culture is by no means a specialty, should be made known to all by the Silk and Fruit Culturists and its exchanges.

The Japanese breeds, white greenish and some second-class yellow cocoons, were brought to me as samples. They were good, but very far from what their mulberry trees can produce. Two of them weighed just about as much as one of our own Cheyennes. This experiment, made in the presence of Mr. Munterferin, Mr. Johnson, and many other gentlemen interested in the business, and before the editors and reporters of the leading papers, has convinced them of the importance of a good breed on the profits of silk culture, and now they understand why the cocoons are quoted at Marseilles from 7 francs to 14 francs per kilogr., and at Lyons the silks from \$2.50 to \$7.50 per pound, or 31 to 75 francs per kilogr.

A "Right Smart Chance." San Francisco Chronicle.

Among the peculiar southern phrases that have been grafted on western slang is "right smart." It has always had an indefinite meaning, but a recent trial for trespass in Calaveras county defined it precisely. It seems that the hogs of one ranchman had ravaged the field of a neighbor. A witness swore that he saw the band of intruding swine, which he described as a "right smart chance of hogs." When asked to put this into figures he declared that in Arkansas or Missouri it meant fourteen. The Judge so charged the jury, as the witness was acknowledged to be an expert on the subject, and they brought in a verdict of full damage for the plaintiff.